

Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554

In the Matter of)
Implementation of Section 621 (a)(1) of)
the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984)
as amended by the Cable Television Consumer)
Protection and Competition Act of 1992)

COMMENTS OF THE CITY OF BELLFLOWER

These comments are filed by The City of Bellflower in support of the comments filed by the National League of Cities and the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors ("NATOA"). Like NLC and NATOA, The City of Bellflower believes that local governments can issue an appropriate local franchise for new entrants into the video services field on a timely basis, just as they have for established cable services providers. In support of this belief, we wish to inform the Commission about the facts of video franchising in our community.

Cable Franchising in Our Community

The City of Bellflower has a population of 77,513. Our franchised cable provider is Comcast of Los Angeles, Inc. Our community has negotiated cable franchises since 1982 with Comcast of Los Angeles, Inc. and its predecessor cable companies.

Competitive Cable Systems

Our community has never been approached by a competitive provider to provide service. As a franchising authority, the City of Bellflower is relative small and not conducive for cable overbuilders. However, the City of Bellflower does expect non-traditional video providers (i.e., telephone companies) to attempt to enter the local market with the emergence of new telecommunications technologies.

Conclusions

The local cable franchising process functions well in The City of Bellflower. As the above information indicates, we are experienced at working with cable providers to both see that the needs of the local community are met and to ensure that the practical business needs of cable providers are taken into account.

Local cable franchising ensures that local cable operators are allowed access to the rights of way in a fair and evenhanded manner, that other users of the rights of way are not unduly inconvenienced, and that uses of the rights of way, including maintenance and upgrade of facilities, are undertaken in a manner which is in accordance with local requirements. Local cable franchising also ensures that our local community's specific needs are met and that local customers are protected.

Local franchises thus provide a means for local government to appropriately oversee the operations of cable service providers in the public interest, and to ensure compliance with applicable laws. There is no need to create a new Federal bureaucracy in Washington, D.C. to handle matters of specific local interest.

Finally, local franchises allow each community, including ours, to have a voice in how local cable systems will be implemented and what features (such as local educational and community channel programming, institutional networks, or local emergency alerts, etc.) will be available to meet local needs. These factors are equally present for new entrants as for existing users.

The City of Bellflower therefore respectfully requests that the Commission do nothing to interfere with local government authority over franchising or to otherwise impair the operation of the local franchising process as set forth under existing Federal law with regard to either existing cable service providers or new entrants.

Respectfully submitted,

City of Bellflower

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